

Wisconsin Karner Blue Butterfly
Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and Environmental Impact
Statement (EIS)

Clarifications and Amendments

CLARIFICATIONS (A)

A. Level III Site Selection: Language in HCP is confusing.

Issue statement: Page G-5, Part E, Level III Monitoring says, “The site pool for Level III Monitoring is the same as the site pool for Level II Monitoring.” This is not exactly an accurate statement. Level III sites are not randomly selected from the entire Level II pool. Level III sites are randomly selected from those sites selected for Level II monitoring in the same year.

Change G-5, Part E, Level III Monitoring:

“The site pool for Level III Monitoring is the ~~same as the site pool~~ group of sites selected for Level II Monitoring in the same year.”

AMENDMENTS (A-C)

A. Effectiveness Monitoring Level II Site Requalification

Change: Lupine sites which qualify to be in the Level II site pool will be eligible for selection for 5 years instead of only 2 years.

Level II sites for Effectiveness Monitoring currently need to be resurveyed for lupine every two years to maintain their eligibility to remain in the Level II site pool (see HCP and EM protocol references below). Based on partner and DNR staff experiences with monitoring, it was suggested that this time period be extended, since this would do no harm to the species or habitat and would save time for field personnel, especially on the larger properties. After some discussion, the IOC recommended that once qualified (i.e., lupine presence confirmed), Level II sites should remain valid for five years. If a site should be selected, as an example, in the fifth year, and the lupine has disappeared from the site, the only harm done is that the surveyor will have to get a new site assignment from the HCP Data Manager and go out to survey the new site. If a partner would rather this not happen, he/she can requalify the site with a Level I survey and report any loss of habitat (lupine) to the DNR more frequently.

***HCP/EIS*, Appendix G, “Effectiveness Monitoring Protocol”, Part E, “Site Eligibility”, page G-5, change as follows:**

Amendment A, continued

Level II Monitoring

The site pool is formed of those sites in the High Potential Range and included by the partners in the HCP, on which the presence of Karner blue butterfly habitat has been established. Sites are chosen from the pool of sites with lupine from the previous ~~two~~ **five** monitoring seasons. A site includes at least 25 plants or clumps of lupine at a density of 50 plants per acre or 25 plants per 200 m of linear distance. A linear site has no more than 200 m of contiguous non-habitat. ROW sites are limited to 250 m in length. Other sites are limited to a maximum size of approximately 40 acres.

HCP monitoring protocol: " A Guide to Conducting Effectiveness Monitoring for the Wisconsin Karner Blue Butterfly Habitat Conservation Plan", updated May 20, 2002; page 3, "Level II Monitoring", **change as follows:**

LEVEL II MONITORING: A site is eligible for Level II monitoring if it meets the following three criteria:

1. The site meets the three criteria listed above for Level I Monitoring, and
2. The presence of lupine has been confirmed on the site within the last ~~two~~ **five** years via Level I Monitoring surveys, and
3. The site has at least 25 lupine plants or clumps of lupine, at a density of 50 lupine plants per acre (or 25 lupine plants per 200 m of linear distance for linear sites)

B. Monitoring Training Certification Shelf-life

HCP Partners and DNR staff who are experienced in performing the HCP monitoring protocols have commented that attending monitoring training every year is redundant, not necessary and a poor use of their limited time. In as much as the partners are responsible to correctly perform HCP monitoring protocols, they are likewise responsible to assure their staff is qualified. Therefore, the IOC has suggested that refresher training be mandatory every 5 years instead of annually. If a person who, as an example, has not performed the monitoring protocol since initial training, and determines he/she is not confident they can correctly perform the protocol, they should be compelled to attend a refresher course before doing monitoring.

HCP monitoring protocol: " A Guide to Conducting Effectiveness Monitoring for the Wisconsin Karner Blue Butterfly Habitat Conservation Plan", updated May 20, 2002; page 6 X.A. "Training", **change as follows:**

~~We recommend that~~ **It is mandatory for** previously certified field personnel **to** undergo refresher training ~~each year~~ **at least once every five years.**

C. Pre-management Survey Shelf-life

Nowhere in the ITP or HCP is there a required absolute timeline beyond which a pre-management survey is no longer valid. In reality, no single prescription can accurately fit all landscapes and circumstances. By unidentified suggestion, further assumption, as being true, and through practice, two years became the default shelf life. We believed this to be founded on some scientific justification. After researching this issue, no justification or two-year requirement was found.

Proposed Minor Amendment:

At its October 9, 2002 meeting, the IOC approved proposing a 5-year pre-management survey shelf life with an option to extend this period up to 8 years with additional justification. The IOC was not in favor of multiple rules for different land management entity groups, but strongly preferred one rule, with some flexibility where KBB absence had previously been documented. Conditions of the 5-8 year rule include:

- The period of time since the pre-management survey being applied must either
 - not be interrupted by another habitat disturbing activity, either natural or human, OR
 - the site has experienced continuous disturbance which precludes the establishment of viable habitat and colonization by KBB; ‘continuous’ meaning serial treatments occurring prior to the completion of a growing season.

Extensions of 5-8 years do not require pre-approval by DNR or FWS. However, Partners will date and document justification; corresponding disturbance activity must follow the dated justification; and written justifications are subject to compliance audits.

Examples of justifications:

- *Where successional change to habitat does not improve chances of unoccupied habitat becoming occupied:* KBB did not previously occur on the site in question nor are they believed to be within reasonable dispersal distance, and in the absence of any disturbance, the habitat has likely further diminished in value to Karners.
- *Where habitat stays the same and occupied habitat is likely still occupied:* Due to significant, depauperate soil or other natural characteristics, natural succession is set back or retarded in the course of normal seasonal senescence of competitive vegetation.

HCP/EIS, Appendix F, “Karner Blue Butterfly Conservation Protocols for Forest Management by HCP Partners”, Part A, Section 1, page F-4, **change as follows:**

Pre-management lupine and Karner blue butterfly surveys should be repeated if at least one growing season has lapsed since harvest and the management activity. If harvest of a mature stand of timber is the prescribed management activity, partners may conduct the pre-management survey up to ~~three~~ **five** years prior to the harvest **or 5-8 years with written justification.**